The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 26, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 12, 1918.

WE PLEDGE—
1 MILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1712 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 5

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Every Army induction center is equipped with a delousing station. The CIO could use one now too.

For the events of the past few weeks have proved even to the most broad-minded that several CIO unions are infested with a type of verminous leadership that is dangerous to the health and safety of the workers of America.

Without conscience, without scruple, without the least vestige of principle, these so-called union leaders have betrayed the basic freedoms of the American labor movement in a major crisis.

This crisis was precipitated by the proposal for a National Service Act, an ill-considered measure which, if enacted, would throw the nation's amazingly successful production program into confusion, disrupt the war effort and deprive American workers of the freedom and independence which makes them superior to the enslaved workers of the Axis.

President William Green of the American Federation of Labor and President Philip Murray of the CIO did not hesitate to denounce the draft-labor proposal. A united front was presented on this vital issue. And then the Communist line of the CIO spoke up.

The Heroes Speak

First we heard from the illustrious Joe Curran of the National Maritime Union, who has been hailed far and wide as one of the great heroes in this war because of his successful fight to evade the draft. Mr. Curran announced that the patriotic thing for labor to do was to consent to enslave itself under the terms of a National Service Act.

This might have been considered merely an individual aberration, but then we heard from Harry Bridges, the supremely loyal leader of the CIO Longshoremen's Union who also has assumed heroic proportions in American life for his long and successful fight to evade deportation. Mr. Bridges also endorsed the draft-labor law.

Then came the leaders of the CIO Radio and Electrical Workers Union and one or two lesser lights of other CIO unions with similar statements.

There was only one way to account for the sudden and impressive desertion of these so-called union leaders from the announced policy of the leader of their national organization. That would be the formation of a new Communist Party line, which is the same thing as a new CIO line. Then we looked up the Daily Worker and, lo and behold, that fearless and independent organ of Moscow opinion had come out for the National Service Act. There was the solidification of the mystery and there was the proof of one of the most despicable betrayals in the staggering record of treachery perpetrated by the Communist Party in America.

The Sudden Conversion

There still lingers in our minds the memory of the Communist Party's strategy when the Hitler-Stalin pact was still in force. Then the Joe Currans and the Harry Bridges were denouncing the fight against Hitler as an "imperialistic war." They were the outstanding non-interventionists in American. When our country was desperately striving to step up war production in the days before Pearl Harbor, the Communist leaders in the CIO were fomenting strikes in the shipyards and the aircraft factories. It was only when Hitler double-crossed Stalin and invaded Russia that the Communists in America became converted to patriotism.

This sudden conversion has reached such lengths that the Communists in this country are espousing capitalism and fraternizing for political advancement with such outstanding statesmen as Mayor Frank Hague of Jersey City.

If the Communist Party line can be stretched that far, we should not be surprised if it can also reverse itself in the matter of the draft-labor proposal. This idea is nothing new to the Russian brand of Communism. Even in normal times, labor in Russia is subject to conditions even more stringent than conscription. We heard during the first Five Year Plan of workers being executed because they supposedly did not meet production schedules.

Such conditions may be acceptable to the people of Russia and the so-called Russian trade unionists. But we can do without them here in America, thank you. And the CIO can do without the counterparts of Russian trade unions. Unless it rids itself of the Currans and the Bridges, they will stab the CIO in the back at every opportunity. And until the CIO succeeds in delousing these unions, there is little hope of a united labor movement in America.

Federation Bans Local Strikes For Any Cause; Charts National Conclave On Post-War Policy

Post-War Conference Announced

Miami, Fla.—The American Federation of Labor announced that it will invite leaders of business, industry, agriculture and the Government to participate with the Federation in a national conference to seek united policies and action on vital post-war problems.

This conference is considered so important to the national welfare that the Carnegie Foundation has agreed to contribute $10,000 toward meeting expenses, it was disclosed this week.

AFL President William Green and Vice President Matthew Woll made the announcement at a press conference following a session of the Executive Council at which comprehensive post-war plans and programs were considered and adopted.

The Executive Council left it to the AFL officers to set the time and place of the national post-war conference and to issue the invitations to outstanding groups in the nation's economic and political life. Mr. Green made it clear that representatives of all AFL State Federations and central bodies would be invited.

Prof. James T. Shotwell, of Columbia University, appeared before the Executive Council to present a plan to abolish future war and to settle international disputes by conciliation. Mr. Green said the Council was deeply impressed by his proposals. Prof. Shotwell, who represented the Carnegie Foundation, also discussed plans for the national post-war conference.

As chairman of the AFL's Post-War Committee, Mr. Woll brought before the Council a series of reports on various aspects of post-war problems which were unanimously approved.

Key to the entire program was the demand for full representation of labor on all agencies dealing with post-war matters.

The first report dealt with reconversion problems. It estimated that ending of the war would cause a shift of 30,000,000 workers from their present jobs.

There must be a national reorganization of our economy in the post-war period to provide jobs for these millions of workers through maximum peacetime production, the report emphasized.

The report recommended that a Reconstruction Commission with full authority to determine the over-all policies by all Government agencies concerned with demobilization, cancellation of war contracts, reconversion, disposal of Government-owned war material, property and expediting production for peace.

Price control and rationing must be continued until stability is attained in the post-war period, the report declared.

It called for the creation of a national employment service to help find jobs for displaced workers and demobilized members of the armed forces.

To tide workers and war veterans over temporary financial difficulties, the report urged adoption of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell amendments to the Social Security Act.

To-aid industry during the reconversion period, the report recommended quick settlement of war contracts, speedy removal of the Government from the sphere of private industry and loans through Federal Reserve Banks.

Council Backs Reconstruction Plan To Spur Post-War Jobs, Business

Miami, Fla.—A clear-cut and orderly plan for post-war reconstruction in America, designed to bring about maximum production and full employment in the shortest possible time, was approved by the AFL Executive Council.

The Council said this report, which was drafted by the AFL's Post-War Committee, follows:

National reorganization for our post-war economy must reverse the controls under which we achieved our mobilization and this reversal must be such that will sustain national income at present levels and thus provide abundant employment. The main war controls are government contracts, materials control, selective service and manpower agencies, priority and allocation of plants, machinery and output, price control and rationing, foreign commerce control, limitation of civilian production. Such a large proportion of production facilities are under these controls, that upon the manner of their release will result progress toward expansion of civilian production or chaos precipitating widespread idleness of machines and men, low national income and a rapid trend toward depression.

Orderly planning to reverse war controls so that free enterprise can take over, requires experience, skill and administration of policies and action. In order to have coordination of planning and timing of demobilization of manpower from the armed forces and war industries as well as cancellation of war contracts and disposal of the Government's war property with reconversion of production facilities to production for peace, Congress should establish a Reconstruction Commission with full authority to determine the overall policies to be followed by agencies concerned with demobilization. The legislation should require the Commission to make quarterly reports to Congress and should provide for a joint committee of the Senate and House to receive and review these reports, hold public hearings and make recommendations to the House and Senate.

In order that the Commission shall be representative of the chief groups concerned in reconversion, it shall consist of representatives selected by the President from nominations submitted by the organizations representing employers, labor and farmers, and a chairman appointed by the President. These appointments should be confirmed by the Senate. In order that the Reconstruction Commission may have the information and experience accumulated by the WPB and the permanent governmental departments, representatives of these agencies should be designated to serve as consultants to the Commission.

The powers of the commission should be a policy-making agency only. Over-all policies should stem from general agreement that we want a civilian economy which will provide all citizens with opportunity to earn a comfortable living and with a national income that will sustain the highest standards of living our production will provide. Reconversion policies should facilitate progress toward that goal. Policies approved by the Commission should be put into effect by the administrative agencies with responsibility for reconversion. The proposed legislation should contain these provisions:

1. There shall be a coordinator of contract cancellation responsible for liquidating the supplies and all contracts in process of cancellation by the procurement agencies. He shall have an advisory committee to aid him with representatives of the armed forces, industrial concerns and labor. In order that the contract cancellation by the various procurement agencies. He shall also assure himself that policies are followed. This coordinator shall submit progress reports to the Commission.

2. One or more coordinators, as the commission shall determine, charged with seeing policies are followed in determining the disposition of government-owned plants, facilities and stock-piles, including machinery. Decision must be made whether Government should sell or retain specific property. Coordinators are directed to create and consult with advisory committees composed of persons selected by persons made.

3. There shall be a coordinator charged with integrating the application of over-all policies with respect to manpower problems in reconversion—demobilization of the armed forces, changes in production, allocations of government plants, changes in agriculture, etc. He shall also be authorized to establish and directed to consult with an advisory committee representative of industry, labor and farmers.

4. The WPB is the logical agency to secure the cooperation of industrial war organizations in connection with over-all policies. While it is liquidating its controls over materials distribution and production limitation, it will assure return of production facilities to civilian production. It should be empowered to grant special aids to reach production goals necessary to assure maximum employment as quickly as possible in line with the controlling policies of the Reconstruction Administration.

5. Price control and rationing of scarce commodities must be continued until stability is attained and should be geared to plans of the Reconstruction Commission.

6. A federal employment service, organized for rapid, efficient action is essential for directing displaced workers and demobilized soldiers to suitable employment opportunities as reconversion plans develop. Transportation expenses should be assured when workers must move to new areas. Every effort should be made to time civilian employment development with demobilization of the armed forces and the release of workers from war production.

7. Provisions should be made to tide workers and industries over financial difficulties; (a) by providing the enactment of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill which provides for both displaced workers and demobilized soldiers; (b) for industries, quick settlement of war contracts, speedy removal of government property, and loans through the Federal Reserve banks or other agencies.

AFL MEMBERSHIP HITS ALL-TIME RECORD HIGH

Miami, Fla.—Secretary-Treasurer George Meany reported to the AFL Executive Council that the average dues-paid membership in the American Federation of Labor during the last four months of 1943 had reached the new high total of 6,586,470.

This figure, Mr. Meany explained, represented a gain of 758,970 members over the same period in 1942.

The membership figures were included in a detailed financial report which showed that the American Federation of Labor is now in the strongest position in its history.

NEW PROGRAM CHARTED ON PUBLIC RELATIONS

Miami, Fla.—The AFL Executive Council directed the officers of the Federation to embark upon a broad and comprehensive public relations program during the coming year.

The Council adopted a report calling for an increase in the AFL's public relations staff and a more extensive use of radio to acquaint the American people with the news and views of organized labor. This action was taken on recommendation of the 1943 AFL convention in Boston.

OFFICE WORKERS UNION TO GET INT'L CHARTER

Miami, Fla.—A new international union may soon be added to the growing list affiliated with the American Federation of Labor—a union composed of office workers which potentially could be the largest in the Federation.

The AFL Executive Council instructed President Green and Secretary-Treasurer George Meany to confer with the officials of the office workers' organization, now made up of Federal labor unions scheduled together in an international council, and to issue an international charter to them as soon as technical questions of jurisdiction are straightened out.

AFL COUNCIL URGES FOOD FOR EUROPEAN CHILDREN

Miami, Fla.—The AFL Executive Council called upon the United Nations to permit the sending of food to the starving children of European countries in Europe now occupied by the Nazis. The Council's declaration follows:

"The American Federation of Labor is deeply concerned over the fate of the starving children in Nazi occupied countries of Europe. The future depends upon the children. To allow them to perish or become subnormal civilization will suffer irreparable loss.

"Experience in Greece and France has shown that they can be saved without aiding the enemy. We are strongly of the opinion that food should be sent to them immediately. To do so is courage and strength to our friends who are fighting for us would shorten rather than prolong the war. Strategy and humanity unite their plans that these children be saved.

"The inhumanity of starving the children of those who fight valiantly for us and whose help we shall urgently need in reconstructing the world after victory is unthinkable. We send food to the prisoners of war and for British and American civilian internees in German held territory, yet we deny the Norwegian, Polish, Dutch and Belgian others fighting with us for their freedom the right to use his own money with which to purchase and send food to his starving wife and children at home. This is not in accord with Anglo-American justice and fair play. It is just as right to send food through the blockade to the families of our Allies as to our own and we respectfully urge upon our Government immediate action to that end."

Soldiers Will Fight, Workers Must Work, Green Declares In Ringing Statement At Close of Council Session

Miami, Fla.—The American Federation of Labor served notice on all of its affiliated unions that there must be no strikes or stoppages of work for any reason in the critical months ahead when the United Nations will make their supreme drive for victory in the war.

President William Green, announcing the action of the AFL Executive Council, declared in unequivocal terms that "the need for sustained and uninterrupted production of vital war materials has now reached the highest point."

"No matter what the character of the grievance may be, no matter how serious or aggravating the circumstances of the dispute, there can be no justification whatsoever for local strikes," he emphasized.

"We are on the eve of tremendous developments in this world war," he said. "Military movements impend that may involve millions of American soldiers and sailors—our own boys. They will meet the test in a courageous way. The soldiers of production must meet their responsibilities in the same courageous way.

"Our soldiers, facing the enemy, will fight. Our workers must work. Local strikes or interruptions of production may imperil the lives of thousands of our boys. They cannot be excused or justified or condoned."

The dramatic declaration of the Executive Council, voiced by Mr. Green, followed the appearance before the Council of Joseph D. Keenan, Vice Chairman of the War Production Board and former Secretary of the Chicago Federation of Labor. Mr. Keenan said there is urgent need for increased production of heavy bombers and light medium bombers; landing craft and radio and radar.

Mr. Green pointed out at a press conference that many thousands of skilled workers who are members of AFL unions are engaged in the production of these essential items. The Council, he said, called on these workers to maintain their no-strike pledge and to give the nation the increased production which will hasten victory.

After taking this action, the Council adjourned its mid-winter session, deciding to hold its next meeting beginning on May 1 in Philadelphia.

The choice of this site was occasioned by the fact that the International Labor Organization will hold its annual meeting in Philadelphia during the last two weeks in April. This will be a highly important ILO meeting because many post-war issues in which the international policies of labor are at stake will be considered there.

The Executive Council rejected an invitation from the British Trades Union Congress to attend a so-called world conference to be held in London next June.

The Council declared that such a conference should be called by the International Federation of Trade Unions, which is the recognized and appropriate international agency truly representative of the free and democratic trade union movements of the world.

In rejecting the British invitation, the Council charged that the British Trades Union Congress had not consulted with the labor movements of other nations affiliated with the IFTU before calling for the proposed conference.

The Council also pointed out that some of the representatives invited to the London meeting cannot represent free labor because there are no free and democratic labor movements in the countries from which they come.

Other countries, the Council declared, would be represented by exiles who have no authority to speak for the workers of their native lands which are now under Hitlerite domination.

There is need for a world labor conference, the Council concluded, but whether this is the proper time to hold it remains questionable. Such a conference, in the unanimous opinion of the Federation, should be called by the IFTU when it is deemed advisable.

AFL Demands Congress Act Soon To Pass Social Security Program

Miami, Fla.—The American Federation of Labor rapped Congress for failure to date to act forthrightly on the Wagner-Murray-Dingell amendments to the Social Security Act.

Demanding early hearings on this essential post-war measure, the Executive Council made public the following report from its Social Security Committee which sums up the Federation's policy on this issue:

Your Committee has been guided by the declaration of the American Federation of Labor that adequate social insurance is Labor's first responsibility in post-war planning. Workers who get jobs immediately will have the security of income but the change-over from a war to peace economy will involve 30 millions of persons and a great problem of our industrial future, with in many cases time-lags of 6 to 18 months between stoppages in war employment and civilian employment which will make new jobs.

Financially the most economical way for the workers to assure themselves income during the emergencies of this change-over, is social insurance. The proposal is also the most economical for employers and for society. In terms of dollars it is the best insurance of the integrity and self-dependence of workers who would be irreparably damaged by relief.

The American Federation of Labor was instrumental in having inserted in Congress legislation to increase materially the number of citizens covered by social insurance; to secure a greater number of emergencies that interrupt income earnings; temporary and permanent disability; to provide unemployment benefits over a period of time that will reasonably assure the workers opportunity to find jobs; to nationalize the employment services and increase the benefits given in the maximum efficiency; and to provide medical care. Our bill also extends similar insurance protection to demobilized soldiers and sailors, this insurance to be financed by the Federal Government.

Already cut-backs in war production are stopping war contracts and without notice, laying workers off. Communities change over night from tight labor markets to an excess of workers for jobs available.

At considerable expense workers have left their homes and gone to war jobs where they could be most useful to the war program. They must rely upon the United States Employment Service to direct them to other war jobs or civilian jobs wherever they can be found.

During 1942, potential benefit duration ranged from 20 weeks in Utah to 8¼ weeks in Kansas. Actual time lost for which benefits were paid ranged from 11.6 weeks in Alabama to 4.6 weeks in Oregon. Various other causes of disqualifications which limit the workers compensation right if they leave jobs for personal reasons have been written into many state laws. This tendency has widened the differences in degree of security provided from state to state.

Our bill pending in Congress would establish a national unemployment compensation system with a uniform duration of 26 weeks in normal times and 52 in emergencies. Congress has given no consideration to our request for adequate early action on social insurance but has acted to freeze the rate of old age insurance despite the warning of actuary that benefits were being paid were in excess of contributions. The Board, instead of heeding to ignore their advice, Congress takes the chance of bankrupting the retirement system by taxing workers contributo and upon which they depend for an adequate living in old age.

Your committee holds that Congress has a contractual obligations with wage earners and should not tinker with the technical basis of that contract without guaranteeing the solvency of the funds and the benefit rates under the law.

Your committee urges that every possible measure be taken to bring home to the minds and consciences of the Senate and Congressman their responsibility for making it possible for those who work for wages to have social insurance that will protect them from relief and dependency.

Business men have an equal stake in the provision of an adequate social insurance system for such a system is essential to maximum production, full employment and sustained high national income. Social insurance, paid for out of production by employers and workers will maintain the responsible and initiative of employers and workers and buttress economic and political freedom.

Two conventions of the American Federation of Labor have declared that legislation to provide adequate social insurance is our paramount legislative objective. We recommend that the 62nd Congress formally request early hearings on the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill by the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committees.

Unions Buy $4,165,000 In War Bonds

Miami, Fla.—New War Bond subscriptions aggregating $4,165,000 were pledged in the Fourth War Loan drive by unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor at a dinner given at the Miami-Colonial Hotel by the Executive Council.

"This is just the start," AFL President William Green said in making the announcement. "The total pledges represent only purchases by ten international unions, the American Federation of Labor itself, and two of its Departments.

"We expect all the other national and international unions as well as many thousands of local unions to subscribe to the Fifth War Loan drive in full measure, also. These subscriptions, plus the individual purchases of six and a half million members of the American Federation of Labor, should swell the total purchases of the American Federation of Labor to more than $200,000,000."

AFL Drafts Intensified Housing Plans

Miami, Fla.—Plans for intensifying the AFL's activities in the field of housing were approved by the Executive Council, which adopted the following report submitted by Vice President Harry C. Bates, Chairman of the Federation's Housing Committee:

Employment in the building trades, beginning with the months immediately ahead, will depend largely on the housing policy pursued by the government. After the war, the housing workers' concern with housing will be even greater. In the past the Housing Committee has done the best it could job in the country of acquainting Congress, housing agencies and the public with the housing problems confronting workers and with labor's policies and programs. The committee has been carrying the load of this work depending entirely on the voluntary and uncompensated services given by the headquarters' staff on a part time basis. The committee believes that a job productive of results cannot be done unless adequate funds are made available to provide our General Labor Unions and local Building and Construction Trades Councils with information and guidance in relation to housing. Nor can workers in individual communities render public service, conduct necessary surveys and develop a campaign unless the Housing Committee can aid them.

In the course of the Boston Convention the chairman of the Housing Committee called a meeting of Central Labor Union delegates to discuss housing needs. More than 70 delegates attended the meeting voted unanimously to request the chairman of the Housing Committee to urge the Executive Council to request the Federation of Labor to approve a program which would enable them to carry out effectively activity in the housing field.

On the basis of extensive consultation with these delegates and with representatives of the various national and international unions, the committee submits the following recommendations to the Executive Council with a request for affirmative action:

(1)—That the Housing Committee be enlarged to consist of seven members appointed by the president of the American Federation of Labor.

(2)—That the committee be authorized to employ one full time person to handle the correspondence and routine work of the committee.

(3)—That additional part time work given by the headquarters staff for necessary services be compensated.

(4)—That the committee be authorized to establish local labor housing conditions in local communities and to prepare for distribution to local unions suggested policies and action related to current housing problems.

Workers' Part in Navy Program Cited

Washington, D. C.—Workers in American factories and shipyards have been given full credit by Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox for the part they played in the achievements of the fighting fleet during 1943.

The Navy Secretary said that during 1943 two and a half times as many planes were produced as were the previous year, more than six times as many aircraft carriers were in commission at the end of 1943 as there were when the Japs attacked Pearl Harbor, 190 new Naval Air Stations and auxiliary fields were completed, double the number finished in 1942, and approximately 3,500 new vessels of all types were placed in commission.

Workers in shipyards met Naval production schedules fully, Knox said. This production schedule required increasing the rate at which ships were finished from about 100,000 tons a month in January 1943 to over 200,000 tons a month at the end of the year.